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HOW TO CARE FOR THE CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

With a little care a poinsettia plant that's in full bloom at

Christmas can be kept in good condition for flowering next year, says

(Name)

The true blossoms, inconspicuous,

(Title)

(Institution)

are surrounded by the bright red leaves or bracts which fall off soon after

the holiday season.

After the leaves have fallen, put the plant in a cool place, between 40° and 60° F., and allow the soil to dry out. Do not water the plant in this stage, which should last until about May. Then, if there is too much old wood to make a shapely plant for next winter, cut it back. Shake the old soil from the roots. Put in a pot just large enough to hold the mass of roots without crowding. Provide drainage in the bottom of the pot. Fill it with fresh soil - three parts garden loam, one part well-rotted manure, and one part leafmold.

After the poinsettia is repotted, set it in a warm, light place and water it whenever the soil seems to be drying out. When the maple trees are in full leaf, set the poinsettia out of doors in a sunny place, still in its pot. Bury the pot in the soil up to its top. This saves repotting in the fall and disturbing the roots. In a very hot climate it's better to place the poinsettia where there is some shade at midday. As soon as growth starts, provide wooden or wire stakes to support the plant and keep the stems straight. It may be necessary to repot the plant once during the summer in a larger pot, if it becomes potbound.



In the fall and when there is danger of frost, it's time to bring the poinsettia indoors. Keep it in a light, airy part of the house, out of drafts, where the temperature ranges from 60° to 65° F. Higher temperatures will make the leaves drop. Keep the soil moist and give a little liquid manure at weekly intervals. Then you'll have flowers and red leaves for next Christmas.

If you use poinsettias as cut flowers, sear the flower stems immediately after cutting by dipping them in hot water or holding in the flame of a candle or lamp.

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